

William G. Hillman
86 Walnut Hill Rd
Bethel, CT 06801

February 23, 2009

Honorable Members of the Planning and Development Committee
Room 2100, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Public Hearing for Legislation Concerning State Mandate to provide property tax relief for taxpayers.

As you know, Towns and Municipalities are budget-impacted each time the state issues a mandate for some sort of required action for which the state fails to fund. The Federal Government does the same to the state, and one visible example is the NCLB laws which are statistically impossible to achieve and greatly burden the states.

The Town of Bethel is wrestling with composing a Town and Education Budget. The Board of Education is proposing teacher layoffs, unpaid furloughs and other drastic actions. The Town is also struggling with a flat year to year budget. However, the combination of unfunded mandates, along with the risk of reductions in Educational Cost Sharing leaved the very real possibility that a flat operating budget could still yield 3%, 4% or even 5% mill rate increases.

I have written my legislators urging the ECS funding remain high, and that the Obama Stimulus be directed so as to keep that funding intact.

A moratorium on additional and costly State Mandates and relief for existing ones will help towns like Bethel reach a voter-accepted budget with a reasonable set of assumptions to set the mill rate.

I pay over \$6500 in property tax. Our neighborhood will soon be hooking up to new sewers, resulting in assessments and additional costs of \$2400 per year. This will have an effective property-tax combined bill with no other increases of \$9000 a year.

Your constituents simply can not afford increases in the mill rate due to unfunded state mandates and loss of ECS and other state aid.

The new legislation should be passed.

Respectfully,

William G. Hillman